

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 119721

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AV 3256 ACTION SECSTATE INFO CAIRO
11 MAY 76.

QUOTE

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 3256

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, ENRG, IS

SUBJ: DRAFT US-ISRAEL NUCLEAR POWER AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 094650

1. ECON COUNSELOR AND SCIATT MET WITH DIRECTOR (EILAM) AND
DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PFLFT) OF IAEC ON MAY 10 TO DISCUSS STATUS
OF DRAFT AGREEMENT. EMBOFFS DESCRIBED TIMING ASPECTS REPORTED
IN REFTEL AND EXPRESSED NEED FOR RAPID PROGRESS IF AGREEMENT
IS TO BE CONCLUDED THIS YEAR. CONCERN ON PART OF U.S. BIDDERS
ABOUT REPORTS OF DELAYS IN PROJECT WAS ALSO MENTIONED. IN
RESPONSE, EILAM SAID REVIEW STILL IN PROCESS BUT SHOULD BE
SUBMITTED TO MINISTERS FOR APPROVAL. HE SAID HE HOPED THEIR
DECISION COULD BE OBTAINED QUICKLY, BUT "THIS IS VERY COMPLEX
SUBJECT, THERE IS STILL CONCERN ABOUT INTRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR
POWER INTO MIDDLE EAST, AND MINISTERS ARE BUSY WITH MANY
OTHER PRESSING PROBLEMS".

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2. WHEN WE COMMENTED THAT WE DETECTED SOME PESSIMISM IN HIS REMARKS, EILAM WOULD SAY ONLY THAT HE WAS NOW "LESS PESSIMISTIC THAN BEFORE." HE DECLINED TO ELABORATE FURTHER ON THE ISRAELI TIMETABLE, BUT SEEMED UNCONVINCED THAT THE MATTER WAS AS URGENT AS WE HAD PRESENTED. REFERRING TO THE U.S. DESIRE TO MAINTAIN PARALLEL PROGRESS ON THE ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN AGREEMENTS, HE SAID THAT HE ASSUMED IT WOULD BE EASIER TO OBTAIN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT IF THE TWO WERE PRESENTED SIMULTANEOUSLY.

3. COMMENT: ISRAELI OFFICIALS EVIDENTLY, AT LEAST UNTIL PRESENT, HAVE FELT LITTLE URGENCY IN MOVING THE AGREEMENT ALONG. THEY NOW HAVE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF TIMING CONSTRAINTS AS PERCEIVED BY USG AND WE ASSUME THAT MATTER WILL SOON BE BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF MINISTERS. WHAT WE DON'T KNOW IS WHETHER MINISTERS WILL BE PREPARED TO MOVE QUICKLY WITH VIEW OF ACHIEVING AN AGREEMENT THIS YEAR. THERE ARE NO DOUBT LINGERING UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT SITE AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS, BUT WE SUSPECT THAT THERE ARE ADDITIONAL REASONS FOR SLOW PROGRESS INCLUDING DESIRE BY, SOME TO CAUSE DELAY IN US-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT. DUNNIGAN UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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